

THOMPSON'S CREEK, 2 miles above its con-
fluence ^{with} LITTLE DRY CREEK.

Sunday, May 16.

On the head of the corrie, above the water-hole, I found some miniature sandstone buttes of curious shapes, which had been carved out of the bank by the elements - wind & water. Their sides were nearly always perpendicular, but viewed in elevation their outlines were very strange. Found one that was about 8 ft in diameter, standing quite isolated, with a petrified tree-trunk running straight through it from side to side. It was very pretty specimen, and had I been after petrified trees I would have taken that.

Shot a very pretty little chipmunk here, a tiny fellow, the smallest I ever saw. Practised with my rifle at a mark, at 100, 200 or 450 yds.

As usual we rose about half past 4 o'clock, and at 6, we were off. Our road lay directly past the Red Buttes, and as usual we horsemen went ahead. Private Moran was some distance in advance of us, & as he got close to the Butte we saw him stop, dismount, and begin to lead his mule out of sight. We knew there were antelope about. He galloped up, dismounted, & stole up to the top of the rocky butte in the direction he indicated, as we neared the top we dropped off our hats, & stole up, with great caution, until we could look over. Nothing directly in front, but 150 yds away on the highest point of a rocky ridge, almost as high as we were, stood two buck antelope, looking down at our horses! We drew up and blazed away. I fired first, & my shot dropped one of the pair instantly. The bullet went square through his head, entering

just behind the eye. His skull was shattered all to pieces, but we got him.

The other antelope ran a little ways, lingered long enough for us each to get in another shot, then ran away.

We ran after it. It ran toward the wagon, & so had to turn back. As we saw it coming we lay down. It saw us, but could not make us out, & came up over the hill so that its whole body came to view, & then we fired. Missed.

It turned & ran, & I fired again, " , & then it stopped 250 yds away. I fired again, & broke its back, which brought it down in short order. Another bullet settled it in short order.

They were both bucks, fine and fat, and had ~~just finished~~ ^{not commenced} shedding their winter coats, so that their hair was long & thick. We decided to skeletonize one & skinize the other, so we cut open the former, took out its entrails and slung it behind the wagon. The other

we washed with water from the canteen to get the blood off before it could dry. Then we wrapped & tied a rubber blanket around it, & put it on the wagon.

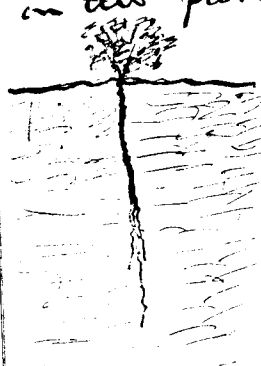
Got no other shot that day. About noon we had made a pull of about 15 miles, & reached the Little Dry Creek. (Saw 3 other antelope).

Took care of our specimens at once, & a hot, tiresome job it was, too. Luckily there was plenty of water, for it was an awful job to wash the blood from the hair of the one we wanted to save. I made the skin up while F. rushed out the skeleton.

In the evening stripped off & with the assistance of a big tin stew-pan had a pour bath. It was very enjoyable. Mr Hedley came down, & I induced him to take the same. The water was quite cool,

+ it made him dance when I poured it on him. It reminded me of the time Jackson had a chill on board the Aunie Gardner + requested me to douse him with buckets of water from the sea. I never saw a man so shocked.

There were three or four trees growing in the bed of the Little Dry, + several little clumps of young cottonwoods, but not one of them had presumed so far as to put forth a leaf as yet. And this is all on ye of the heat + dryness. We saw at the edge of a steep bank how the sage-brush manages to survive on the parched plains. This is how:



He sends down his roots straight as an arrow, right down into the very bowels of the earth. 4 to 5 feet, or more. + does not waste any on the upper soil.

Found a hawk nesting, or building, rather. no eggs.

For dinner we had antelope steaks, nicely cooked. The meat was tender, juicy and sweet, perfectly delicious in fact. I never saw men eat so; and I don't think I ever ate so myself. The difference between ^{fresh} antelope and salt sow-belly was about as great as palate of man could cover at one leap with anything like safety.

Antelope is the only large game of the plains that is as good in spring + summer as in fall + winter; but it is first-class all the year round. + the finest of them all.

Monday, May 17th

Pulled out early as usual. Followed down the Little Dry a few miles, + found plenty of water in it.

SHORT-STOP CAMP.

Saw an antelope, but he kept about 2 miles ahead of us all the morning. - very wild & wary. Passed the usual number of buffalo skeletons, about two or three to every mile.

About noon met 2 cow-boys, one a Mr Tow, part owner of Tow's ranch, at the mouth of Sandy Creek, the other a Mr Boyd, one of Mr H. R. Phillips' men, who is the one who is left in charge at the ranch, on the Little Dry. He gave us some advice, which caused us to change our course a little farther on where we struck a side trail & turned off to go to the ranch. The young man cordially invited us to come there & put up. Said the ranch was ¹²~~5~~ miles away. About 3 o'clock we reached water, & decided to camp. I called it the Short-Stop Camp, because we stopped short of the Ranch by 3 or 4 miles. Had no wood except what we carried on the wagon

with us. The bank beside the water-hole made us a table. Andrew shot & skinned a spermophile.

Tuesday May 18th

Reached Phillips ranch on the Little Dry, at the mouth of Phillip's Creek, about 11 o'clock. Met Boyd & Tow near the ranch looking for horses, & the former told us to go on & make ourselves at home. We did so, for the cook wanted to make bread. The door was unlocked, & ranch doors always are in this country, so that any wandering cow-boy who happens along can go in, get something to eat, & sleep also if necessary. Boyd says the privilege is seldom abused, & then only near the R.R. by tramps. This is the LU (or in other words "L M bar") ranch, that being the brand of this "outfit". Tow's ranch is the HV ranch. On our way up we passed the Y (wine cup) ranch,

LU RANCH.

and also the  (bridle-bit) ranch.

I will defer a description of the LU ranch until I have seen more of it. See a later issue of this journal.

On the arrival of the wagon the cook fired up the cook-stove, & baked nearly a bushel of biscuits, using Hecker's Baking Powder.

Mr Hedley & I rode north up the divide back of the "shack", & looked for game. Rode about 6 or 7 miles up, saw nothing, & returned, hot, tired & sleepy. Saw abundant signs of sage-grouse. When we got back found Boyd there, & we all had dinner at his shack. He furnished the tables, & we the grub. In the evening I went up with Johnnie, Moran & Andrew, a light wagon & span of mules about 3 miles up the ridge to where Mr H. & I saw 2 fine bull buffalo skeletons this A. M. Cut them up & cleaned them, & loaded them in for Washington.

They were absolutely perfect, not the smallest bone missing. The wind & sun had dried the tendons & held the bones together, while the crows & other things had eaten the flesh.

The bones of the upper side were white as chalk. The hides had been taken from the body, but where it had been left on the head it was there still, dry & hard as rawhide. Put in an extra skull. Eighteen buffalo skeletons lay bleaching on a space of not over three acres in extent.

This was a very good afternoon's work. Stove the bones away at the ranch to be taken back to Miles by the wagon when it returns.

Mr Hedley went out with Boyd to hunt sage grouse in the evening. He got only a rabbit & some small birds. Threatened rain, but no rain came. At night there was lots of talk in the shack by candle-light about bull

PHILLIP'S CREEK.

cow-punchers & good ones, desperados, fights, outrages, capers, etc. etc.

Wednesday May 19th

Early in the morning struck out up the divide to go up Phillips Creek 8 or 9 miles & camp permanently. There was no trail, so we had to make one. Boyd very obligingly came along & piloted us. Our heavy wagon (1800 lbs) had hard work of it, but it got there. When the wagon had nearly gone far enough we 4 horsemen struck off into the high divide N. of Phillips Creek, and spread ourselves over it to hunt it. Boyd & I went together & took the farther side. It was a bewildering expanse of ridges, hollows & buttes, several miles wide. Saw half a doz. antelope during the day. Mr. Hedley & Moran hit one mortally, but did not hunt for it long enough, so it escaped to die. At another they overshot.

Boyd & I rode nearly to the Little Dry. saw what we thought were buffalo tracks, & later thought we saw buffalo, but they proved to be only cattle. Saw black-tail & antelope tracks. Had a long, hard, hot ride. The heat and shimmering haze was awful. On such hot, windy days distances seem greater, objects seem smaller, & the hunter is apt to overshoot, by overestimating the distance.

We rode to the end of the big divide, which swings round the head of the Little Dry & runs of S-E.

Reached camp about 3. ~~Found~~ Found the camp in an alkali flat, where for acres & acres the bare ground was white as snow with a thick deposit of alkali, & the water simply undrinkable. But Providence came our aid. Boyd & I, in approaching the camp from above discovered a running spring of good clear water.

which alone will enable us to stop here! But for it we would have to pull out to one side of our buffalo hunting ground. As it is, we can stop in the middle of it. This discovery was a great relief to the party. The spring was in a deep gully not 200 yds from the tents! And the water did not taste of alkali at all.

I was too tired & hot to eat any dinner, but Boyd's appetite was good. The only comfortable place in the camp was under the wagon, in the shade, and in the wind. There we all stretched out on our backs, as many as the shade would hold, & like tired dogs rested. In the evening when it got a little cooler, - I mean a little less hot, Mr H. & I went out to the pools in the creek above camp, & shot at some ducks. I got a blue-winged teal. The heat was

awful, & so were the big buffalo gnats & mosquitos. Late in the evening saw a sharp-tailed grouse, but had no gun. There are a great many muskrats close to our camp. Five were shot about sunset, as soon as they began to move about.

Soon after the tents were pitched, the boys say an antelope came walking along between the camp & the high red bluff on the E., not over 150 yds away. Moran managed to fire at it but missed, & it quietly trotted off.

Thursday, May 20.

Fearfully high wind all day: nearly blew our tents over, & made us miserable. Hot too, & glaring. Being all used up we remained in ~~our~~ camp all day to rest & recuperate for the morrow. Skinned a duck which Moran shot, & Andrew steel, another, North Josephine, & wrote up my Journal. A very bad day outside. Wind blew the coffee right out of my cups at dinner.

Friday, May 21st

A big day. Got up early, and just as Mr Hedley, Moran & I were mounting our ponies to ride up to Sunday Creek and stay all night, up came our cow-boy, Boyd, & said he was going to ride across the little Dry to the head of the Porcupine to look for a horse. We said we would go along, if he had no objection; - so we all rode off S-W.

We three had our blankets strapped behind our saddles, & mine made a bundle so big I could scarcely get my leg over it in mounting.

We saw an antelope, & separated, in order to the better take it in. Mr H & I went one way, & the other two kept together. Rode around a big butte, and on the farther side I dismounted and walked up to the top and looked over. Coming down again I took my pony, & went to get on. ~~My~~ In throwing my leg over the big roll of blankets,

my spur raked my pony across the rump, & instantly the accursed little beast began to leap and plunge forward madly. I had my heavy rifle in my right hand, so that hand was powerless to help me, & the rifle was loaded, too. I said "Whoa, Dujin!" but I knew what was in store for me. The little devil made half a dozen plunges forward & up in the air with lightning-like rapidity; and I had to come down at last. Over I went with the hard prairie, rifle & all. It seemed that I fell from a height of ten feet. I struck on my right hip, shoulder, & both hands, and it seemed to me that no ground was ever so hard & stone-like as that. It shook me up from head to foot, and made every bone crack. Away ran the pony, galloping madly down the slope; I had a

I great mind to shoot him with my Winchester, and would have done so had the hunt been practically over. Mr Hedley caught the miserable little beast, after a chase, & I mounted again. Then I dug the spur into his ribs, and the way I ran him up and down was not slow.

Then we heard Boyd halloo on the other side of the ~~water~~ butte. Rode around there, and found that he & Moran had run into a young buffalo calf, alive! Boyd unslung his rope forthwith. Moran tried to catch it with his hands, but it butted him so he had to knock it on the rump with the butt of his gun, then Boyd threw a noose over it, caught all its legs, & held it fast, to be tied. It was about 10 days old, a cunning little beast, covered with coarse, woolly, ~~black~~ sandy (red) hair, but very

poor & thin. It was so small I easily picked it up in my arms and carried it. We took the straps from my saddle, strapped its legs together so it could not get away, & after tying it to a bunch of sage-brush mounted & rode on to find the old buffalo.

Before we arrived upon the scene Boyd & Moran saw two or three old buffalo making off across the hills, & they should have followed them at once. We put spurs to our horses & galloped madly in the direction taken by the herd. Presently we divided our party into two, to cover more ground, the cowboy & I going together.

As we were galloping smartly across a perfectly level bit of prairie, down went my pony as if he had been shot, lurching me full length on the grass as gently as you please.

My foot fortunately left the stirrup, after a smart wrench, & the pony arose & galloped off without having done me any harm. Boyd caught the miserable little son of a dog, & we lost no time in going on. The pony stumbles badly, & never so badly as today, all day. Boyd swore it was as much as a man's life was worth to ride him. If I were not obliged to carry that damned rifle in my right hand wherever I go, & thus lose entirely the use of my strong right hand, I'd bet I would break the pony's neck long before he could mine. I'd like to see him get me off when I have both hands free. But in carrying a 10-lb rifle, loaded, every step I ride, I am handicapped. Perhaps it is the pony's shoes that make him stumble so. I will have them taken off at once, as an experiment.

Rode across Little Dry Creek. Went through a big prairie-dog town, which was thickly populated. Saw a coyote in a ravine, got off & shot it. It came down promptly, but picked itself up, with its hind-quarters all bloody, & ran off on 3 legs. Fired after it with no success. Followed it some distance on foot, & ran it into some holes, where it was safe.

Meanwhile my pony ran away, & Boyd chased it about two miles before he caught it. Came near giving it up. My field-glass was lost out of its case during the chase, but its loss was not discovered until we were nearly home. Too bad! That glass has been with me on all my trips.

Rode back toward home. Mr Hedley & Private Moran got the calf to camp, & it was a big job. First they tried to carry it in their arms; but it was too heavy to carry far. Then they put it in